GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
WATER RESOURCES
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:578
ANSWERED ON:06.05.2002
NATIONAL WATER POLICY
ASHOK NAMDEORAO MOHOL;RAMSHETH THAKUR

Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether National Water Policy has left many loopholes for the market forces to take advantage;

(b) if so, whether the new policy belied the people's expectation of decentralisation of water development and management and encouragement to community based water harnessing; and

(c) if so, the steps taken by the Government to decentralise water development management and encouragement to community based water harnessing ?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI ARJUN CHARAN SETHI)

(a) to (c) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (c) OF STARRED QUESTION NO. 578 TO BE ANSWERED THE LOK SABHA ON 6.5.2002 REGARDING NATIONAL WATER POLICY.

(a) & (b) No, Sir.

(c) The Revised National Water Policylays emphasis on the participation of community, i.e. all stakeholders including beneficiaries and adversely affected persons, in planning, construction and management of water resources in the country. Para 6.8 on "Project Planning" provides that :

"The involvement and participation of beneficiaries and other stakeholders should be encouraged right from the project planning stage itself."

A separate new para 12 addresses itself to "Participatory Approach to Water Resources Management" and provides that :

"Management of the water resources for diverse uses should incorporate a participatory approach; by involving not only the various governmental agencies but also the users and other stakeholders, in an effective and decisive manner, in various aspects of planning, design, development and management of the water resources schemes. Necessary legal and institutional changes should be made at various levels for the purpose, duly ensuring appropriate role for women. Water Users' Associations and the local bodies such as municipalities and gram panchayats should particularly be involved in the operation, maintenance and management o f water infrastructures/facilities at appropriate level progressively, with a view to eventually transfer the management of such facilities to the user groups/local bodies."

Further, para 23.3 on "Maintenance and Modernisation"provides that :

"Formation of Water Users' Association with authority and responsibility should be encouraged to facilitate the management including maintenance of irrigation system in a time bound manner."

In the concluding paragraph, the policy reiterates that :

"The concerns of community need should be taken into account for water resources development and management."